

June 12, 2018

Robert and Mary Ann Blais
Blazeman Foundation for ALS
172 Marnoch Drive
Seekonk, MA 02771-3812

Dear Bob and Mary Ann,

I am writing to express my gratitude to you and the *Blazeman Foundation for ALS* for your most generous and continued support of the University of Maryland Brain and Tissue Bank. Your recent grant of \$50,000 towards the "Expansion of the Blazeman ALS Tissue Collection" project, combined with the balance of your previously granted funds of almost \$20,000 truly strengthens our ability to promote the donation of brain and other tissue from ALS donors, and to distribute biospecimens to interested researchers and investigators. These funds were combined and used to establish a new account in May in honor of ALS Awareness Month 2018.

The importance of this support cannot be over stated, and the results are measurable and notable. Your support allows us to attend the annual Neuroscience meeting, one of the largest professional meetings of scientists in the country, attracting over 30,000 investigators from around the world. We set up a booth at this meeting where our work can be promoted via custom-made banners, the distribution of literature, and one-on-one meetings with scientists inquiring about tissue. I am pleased to report that this current fiscal year, ALS is ranked number one in terms of the number of samples we have shipped from neurologic and developmental disease tissue. So far this year we have shipped 199 samples to six different investigators. This is greater than the previous two years combined, and the largest number since our current NIH contract was initiated in 2014. It is also encouraging that while some investigators continue to request tissue year after year, we are getting requests from new investigators each year as well.

As we go forward, the Maryland Brain and Tissue Bank is making renewed efforts at providing tissue donor information to ALS clinics, identifying smaller meetings/conferences where ALS is more in focus to identify additional researchers with a potential interest in ALS tissue, and looking forward to working closely with the *Blazeman Foundation for ALS* to identify specific ALS investigators with whom we might establish a working relationship to expedite their research. All these activities and more are only possible through your generosity, encouragement and guidance. We look



forward to continuing our participation in the fight against ALS and furthering Jonathan's wish to promote and facilitate ALS research, "...so others may live." Thank you again for your continued support and trusting the University of Maryland Brain and Tissue Bank to work together with you in the furtherance of this mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Blanchard", written in a cursive style.

Thomas Blanchard, Ph.D.
Director, University of Maryland Brain and Tissue Bank

